

May 12, 1975

costs, you see. Once a contract is entered into.

SENATOR KOCH: Well, I guess the point that I am making and I am maybe making it only for myself because I find it terribly difficult to sit here and make a decision on \$600,000, if I don't have information before me such as you have and to determine whether or not it is a realistic figure or if it is, shall we say fat or unnecessary. I'd like to see those figures. The other day we were talking about mental health programs and we were talking about region 6 and the need for money. I got a hold of those figures and I was able to make a vote based upon them. Here I find it very difficult and intangible to make a valid decision.

PRESIDENT: Senator Cavanaugh, are you ready to close debate by reply? Excuse me, Senator Frank Lewis' light was on.

SENATOR F. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, just one more time, and I apologize for speaking twice on the same issue but I think the issue has been clouded and I think it ought to be clarified. To start with, number one, that by cutting this program you are not cutting administrative costs. There are legitimate studies ongoing now to study the efficiency of the operation of these regions and we spent \$200,000 of taxpayers money to do so with the Tews-Ross study. Those need to be implemented. A \$600,000 across the board decrease is not going to effectively implement those kind of concerns and you need to know that. You are not going to cut administrative costs by rejecting this amendment. The second thing you need to know is that it is an involved process, particularly as you relate to the welfare eligibility criteria, and the third thing you need to do, and I am prepared to offer the bill next year that will do that, is that for the state to get on the line for the level of funding you will offer in this particular area. Now we have done that in LB 302. That bill is specific. It says the state will provide 75% of funding and this bill we have tried to say this in a roundabout way. Now either we are going to provide the majority of funding for this program or we are not and we are considerably off. We are at a level of 28%. This leads me to believe, and I hope leads the taxpayers of the state to believe, that we are long on talk and short on delivery. I suspect that each and every one in here voted to say that we believe in that program and we think the funding ought to be 75% but when it comes time to shell out the bucks, we are under a rock or we are hiding or we are saying that that's administrative cost or something else. You are not going to resolve the problem in the sophisticated area of administrative cost, delivery of services by rejecting this amendment and saying, "Well, we have cut costs." You are not going to get that. What you are going to resolve is you are going to say is we cut program and that ought to be loud and clear and everyone ought to know it, that this vote, if you are against the Cavanaugh amendment, you favor cutting the programs in mental retardation and we ought to have a record vote on that to know where you stand.

PRESIDENT: Senator Cavanaugh, would you close debate please?

SENATOR CAVANAUGH: Mr. President, members of the Legis-